REMARKS

Claims 19, 22-26, 29, and 32 are currently pending in the application. Claims 29 and 32 have been amended. Claims 20, 21, 28 and 31 have been canceled

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

The Examiner has rejected claims 19, 20, 28 and 31 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Smolyar et al. (US Patent 6,314,130). Claims 20, 28 and 31 have been canceled. The rejection of claim 19 is respectfully traversed. Claim 19 states "restricting each finger from tracking ***outside*** motion limits for that finger" (emphasis added). Smolyar simply does not teach this.

Directing the Examiner's attention to Fig. 3, any fingers that need to be moved are moved in step 14. Then, only after they are moved, the finger blocks are redefined if necessary. In col. 9 lines 28-35, Smolyar describes how its fingers movements occur: "If a finger movement is required ... then each finger [that] needs to be moved ***is moved*** to its new location in step 145. ***Finally***, in step 16, a redefinition of the finger blocks occurs whenever the finger movement of step 14 causes new fingers to become ***within*** RANGE of each other, or when closely spaced fingers are separated and are not [sic] longer within RANGE of each other." (emphasis added). Clearly, if the fingers are moved first and then new blocks are defined, they can move closer than RANGE to each other. So if one were to view RANGE as some sort of motion limits, RANGE does not restrict each finger from tracking outside the motion limits as claimed.

The Examiner's new citation to Col. 11 lines 1-2 is noted, but the text cited to is not an accurate description of Smolyar's system. As discussed above, the system taught by Smolyar and shown in Fig. 3 will not function as stated in Col. 11 lines 1-2. Instead, once two fingers have become closer to each other than 7/8 Tc, then they will be redefined as a finger block.

Regarding the citation to col. 8 lines 36-40 and col. 9 lines 54-61, the 1.5 Tc is not a minimum separation between fingers. Rather Smolyar permits the fingers move within 1.5Tc of each other and then locks the fingers into a finger block so that they move in lockstep. See Col 9 lines 28-35 ("a redefinition of the finger blocks occurs whenever the finger movement of step 14 causes new fingers to become ***within*** RANGE of each other..." (emphasis added). So the

Smolyar reference doesn't teach or suggest restricting each finger from tracking ***outside*** motion limits. This rejection should be withdrawn

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Smolyar et al. over La Rosa et al. (US Patent No. 6,078,611). Claim 21 has been canceled.

CONCLUSION

This case should now be in condition for allowance.

In light of the foregoing, the Examiner's reconsideration of this application with a view toward allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned agent if a telephone call could help solve any remaining items.

Please charge any fees or overpayments that may be due with this response to Deposit Account No. 17-0026.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 3/8/06

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